



The Conservation Corner

Newsletter of the Charleston, S. C. Soil and Water Conservation District

2005 Annual Report

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ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION AT NEW SCHOOL

Arbor Day is traditionally celebrated the first Friday of December. The Charleston Soil & Water Conservation District was honored to sponsor this first event for North Charleston Elementary School, a new environmentally built school in North Charleston. A tree planting ceremony was held December 2, 2005 where a beautiful Red Bud tree was donated by John Smoak's tree nursery. It was planted in the Kindergarten playground area where approximately 75 Kindergarten students participated in this ceremony as they sang, danced, read



Arbor Day stories and took turns adding shoveled soil to their new tree. William S Simpson, Chairman, opened the ceremony on behalf of the District. Jack Day, Commissioner, William Wilkes, Associate Commissioner, and Debbie Eckard, Education Coordinator dressed as (**"Twiggy the Tree"**) were present for the event. The District would like to thank Charles Cavileer, Principal, and Marla Williams, Technical Assistance Team Teacher Specialist, for making this a memorable event for all present.



Greg Henderson, President, SCACD presents 2005 Teacher of the Year Award to Twila Shaw.

2005 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

The 2006 South Carolina Conservation Partnership Conference was held January 3-6, 2006, at Kingston Plantation in Myrtle Beach, SC. On Thursday, an awards banquet was held at the House of Blues. These awards recognize outstanding achievements made in conservation.

For excellence in Conservation Education, Twila Shaw of James Island Christian School in Charleston, SC, was selected as the **"2005 Teacher of the Year."** Twila has been very active in the Envirothon Program for the past 7 years. Her team won the State Envirothon Competition in

2002 and she has placed in the top 10 for the last seven years.

Twila is an excellent example of dedication to Conservation Education and the Charleston Conservation District is proud to sponsor her each year!

Congratulations Twila !

WELCOME TO LINDSAY WHITE



Lindsay White, DNR Program Coordinator, recently joined the Charleston Team. Originally from South Dakota, Lindsay attended college at Salisbury University in Maryland, receiving a B.S. in Geography. Following a year working for a Forest Products consulting firm, Lindsay headed South to attend graduate school at the College

of Charleston. She completed her M.S. in Environmental Studies in 2003, working with the US Forest Service on her thesis. Lindsay continued on with the Forest Service as an Ecologist, developing a fire research program, until accepting a job with SC DNR in February. A USFS publication from her work "History and Legacy of Prescribed Fire in

South Carolina" is expected to be available in the next few months.

Lindsay will assist the Charleston District with major projects. One of these projects will be the formation of a web page. Lindsay is also interested in assisting the District with small animal waste management programs and grant acquisition for new programs.

DISTRICT IN ACTION



Charleston AFB Earth Day



Certificate of Appreciation

2005 Affiliate Membership

- 57 Contributing Members
- 25 Associate Members
- 41 Sustaining Members
- 4 Advertising Members

127 Total Members
Total funds \$7750.00



Lander Institute Scholarship Recipients

L-R: Andrew Cheatham, John Wienges, Brittany Martin, Stephanie Berry, Ying Fang, both from Charleston and Owen McKagen.

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EARTH DAY CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE

Over 1,000 5th grade students from throughout the Lowcountry participated in various environmental activities at this year's Earth Day celebration. The District was again invited to participate and featured an exhibit on water conservation.

The students were divided into small groups that visited each exhibit for approximately 20 minutes. Our presentation stressed the importance of

SOUTHEASTERN WILDLIFE EXPO

The District sponsored a booth to display the various activities available to Lowcountry citizens interested in conservation of our natural resources.

The display highlighted an exhibit that encouraged urban property owners to participate in practices that protect and

conserving and protecting the world's water resources. William Kennerty, William Wilkes and Debbie Eckard represented the District.

JANUARY PARTNER CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference was held at Charleston Place with the theme "Blueprint for Success" setting the tone for the three participants: SC Association of Conservation Districts; SC Department of Natural Resources and the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service.

encourage wildlife habitats.

Over 40,000 attendees visited the Conservation area where District/NRCS staff had an opportunity to interact with fellow wildlife conservationists. The EXPO was held February 15-17 and was the 10th consecutive year that the District was invited to participate.

The Keynote speaker was Krista Harden, CEO of the National Association of Conservation Districts. Other speakers presented topics ranging from South Carolina's Conservation Bank to Farm and Ranch Protection Program. Break-out sessions were held for all Standing Committees and an Awards Session honored outstanding individuals in the conservation cause.

As usual, District/NRCS staffs played key roles in the Conference.

SOIL STEWARDSHIP WEEK

Soil Stewardship Week was celebrated *April 24-May 1, 2004*. This year's topic was "*Conserving Natural Resources for our Future*". The District donated free materials to churches in the area. Contact the District if your church would be interested in learning more about Soil Stewardship.

LANDER INSTITUTE

The SC Institute for Natural Resource Conservation is conducted by Lander University and is an opportunity for high school juniors and seniors from across the state to study the environment up close for a week and leave with multiple rewards. The District sponsored two students, **Ying Fang and Stephanie Berry** on June 27 - July 1, 2005.

Both girls won \$500 scholarships!! We are so very proud of these two girls!!

"**Bringing the Natural World Indoors**" was presented by Debbie Eckard, Education Coordinator, to several Garden Clubs this year.

We appreciate the support of these clubs that become Affiliate Members!!

GARDEN CLUBS



Alhambra Garden Club

Camellia Garden Club

South Windemere Garden Club

Drayton on the Ashley Garden Club

DISTRICT EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

ENVIROTHON

The District once again proudly sponsored James Island Christian School for the 8th Annual South Carolina Envirothon Competition. James Island Christian School, coached by Twila Shaw, has had a team compete in this program the last 7 years. The competition was held at Clemson Research Institute at Sandhill Center in Columbia Friday, May 6th, 2005. High school students from all over the state competed on topics such as soils, water resources, forestry, wildlife and current environmental issues.

James Island placed first in the oral presentations and 4th over all. We are so proud of this young team...congrats to them!!!

Freshmen: Amy Hirschman, Chelsey Kight, James Folsom;

Junior: Chris Fulghum and **Senior:** Krystal Higdon.



L-R: Team Coach Twila Shaw, Amy Hirschmann, Chelsey Kight, Krystal Higdon, Chris Fulghum and James Folsom.

2005 POSTER WINNERS

The 2005 Poster Contest topic was **"What Tree Did YOU Fall From?"** The winners are as follows:

Kindergarten - Montessori Community School, Terry Hartnett, Teacher.

First Grade - Minnie Hughes Elementary School, Sylvia Bailey and Gayle Ashbee, Teachers.

Second Grade - Montessori Community School, Carole Anne O'Neal, Teacher.

Third Grade - Hunley Park Elementary School, Neeley Taylor, Teacher.

Fourth Grade - Montessori Community School, Robin Wiggins, Teacher.

Fifth Grade - Hunley Park Elementary School, Martha Hohorst, Teacher.

2005 ESSAY WINNERS

This year's Essay Topic was **"What Tree Did YOU Fall From?"** The following students were winners in the Essay Contest:

7th Grade - **Hannah Ellison**, Ashley Hall School; Teacher, Susan Rodewoldt

9th Grade - **Diksha Gautham** Porter Gaude School; Allene Barans, Teacher.



"What Tree Did YOU Fall From?"

AWARDS DINNER

The District held an Awards Dinner May 24, 2005 to recognize individuals who have excelled in environmental conservation and education. This year the District recognized Jake and Carole Bishop as the 2004 "Conservationist of the Year." The 2005 Outstanding School Participation Award was presented to Terry Hartnett, Carole Anne O'Neal, and Robin Wiggins of Montessori

Community School. The 2005 "Teacher of the Year Award" was presented to Susan Rodewaldt of Ashley Hall School. The Outstanding Environmental Education Award was presented to Twila Shaw of James Island Christian School.

DISTRICT SPONSORS SCIENCE FAIR

The Lowcountry Science and Engineering Fair, sponsored by The College of Charleston, was held in March at the

Shrine Temple in Mt. Pleasant. The Fair brings together hundreds of the areas brightest and best high school juniors and seniors who presented a variety of science and engineering projects, ranging from biochemistry to zoology.

The District sponsored a \$75 savings bond to junior winner Kelly Engle, whose project was "What's in Your Water?" and to senior winner Andrew Pstrak, whose project was

"Dirt" (or Soils Analysis Practices).

Invited back this year as Judges were Commissioners William Simpson and William Kennerty and Associate Commissioners Barbara Neale and William Wilkes.



DISTRICT EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

“WATER” AT WHITESIDES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Bill Wilkes, Associate Commissioner, and Debbie Eckard, Education Coordinator, of the Charleston Soil & Water Conservation District presented a “Water Conservation Program” to approximately 45 students in the after school program at Whitesides Elementary School on December 1, 2005. A water quality program and demonstration was given to emphasize the importance of water conservation.



Charleston Conservation District feels strongly about getting the word out to schools and students regarding our natural resources and how very scarce and precious they are to their generation.



William Wilkes Associate Commissioner of the Charleston Soil & Water Conservation District speaks to students about water conservation.

PALMETTO YOUTH GROUP

The Charleston Conservation District sponsors a booth at the Carolina Coastal Fair held annually in October at the Exchange Park fairgrounds in Ladson, SC. For the past 3 years the District has been asked to present a conservation program to a special group of teenagers called the Palmetto Youth

Group. This is a group of 9th graders from Dorchester County that have special interests in conservation.

Bill Wilkes and Debbie Eckard gave an overview of the all the conservation programs available that the District provides, plus told them about other volunteer programs such as the “Adopt-A-Dune” project that focuses on dunes restoration.

We would like to thank Clemson Extension Service for including the District in this special event each year.



EDISTO-SAVANNAH VALLEY AREA MEETING

The Edisto Savannah Area Meeting was hosted by Barnwell Soil & Water Conservation District on September 8, 2005. It was held at Clemson University’s Edisto Research & Education Center near Blackville, SC.

The welcome was given by Dr. James Riley Hill, Chairman of the Barnwell Conservation District. Following a nice buffet lunch,

the program consisted of a tour of the facility by Dr. Steve Meadows, Director. An overview of Precision Ag Program and field demonstration was given by Dr. Ahmad Khalilian and was very informative.

Dr. Mike Sullivan provided the group with information on the latest Cotton Entomology Research techniques. Dr. Larry Olson spoke to the group on Fescue Establishment / Land Restoration. The day ended

with a business meeting headed by Robert Long Edisto Savannah Area President.

Those attending from the Charleston District were Commissioners Jack Day, Raymond and Carla Tumbleston, Dwayne Mangum (NRCS), and Debbie Eckard, District Office Administrator.



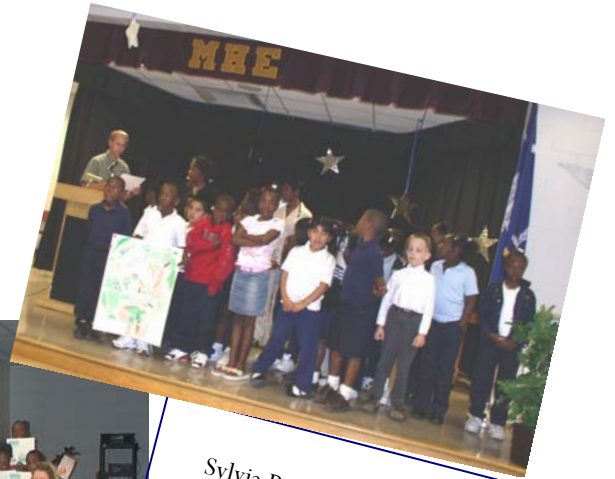
Pictured above L-R is Debbie Eckard, Raymond and Carla Tumbleston from Charleston District.

DISTRICT NEWS

POSTER & ESSAY WINNING PICS



Terry Hartnett's **Kindergarten Class**
Montessori Community School



Sylvia Bailey & Gayle Ashbee's
First Grade Class
Minnie Hughes Elementary School



Robin Wiggins **Fourth Grade Class**
Montessori Community School



Neeley Taylor's **Third Grade Class**
Hunley Park Elementary School



Carole Ann O'Neal's
Second Grade Class
Montessori Community School



Martha Hohorst's **Fifth Grade Class**
Hunley Park Elementary School



Ashley Hall School - **Sixth Grade Essay Winner**
L-R Chairman William Simpson,
Teacher, Susan Rodewoldt and
Diksha Gautham, Student.



9th Grade Essay Winner - Porter Gaud School
L-R: Allene Barans, William Kennerty,
Hannah Ellison, Debbie Eckard and Pete Kennedy.

Resource Concerns Determined for Charleston/Berkeley

Members of the Charleston and Berkeley County Local Work Groups were asked to determine the annual rankings of local resource concerns for 2006. These members were asked to participate because of their knowledge of the concerns and their influence in the future direction of their County.

This year the resource concerns were revised to add an additional concern. There are now nine concerns to be ranked according to local priorities. As land management, programs, policies and other factors are constantly changing, it was imperative that the Groups review and update their concerns. It is particularly noteworthy that fifty-four (54) surveys were mailed with a one hundred percent (100%) return. Results were diverse between the two Counties. For example, the #1 concern in Charleston County is surface water quality, in Berkeley it's #2; in Berkeley #1 is habitat quality, in Charleston it's #5.

The top three concerns are:

CHARLESTON

Surface Water Quality
Wetlands Health
Ground Water Quality

BERKELEY

Habitat Quality
Surface Water Quality
Wetlands Health

Many thanks to all those who participated....they are truly concerned citizens!

Conservation Programs Provide Cost Share in 2005

In Charleston county, NRCS funded a total of \$98,625 for conservation contracts under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Small Farmers Incentive Program (SFIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). These programs provide cost share incentives to promote conservation on the land to address resource concerns.

Practices may include, but are not limited to:

- Pasture and Hay Establishment
- Water Troughs and Heavy Use Areas
- Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Management
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- Firebreak Establishment
- Prescribed Burning
- Rotational Grazing

If you are interested in the conservation programs or any assistance with resource management, contact our office for assistance or go to the NRCS website: www.nrcs.usda.gov



Farm Bill Programs: frequently asked questions

How can I improve the chances of having my application to enroll in a conservation program accepted?

Applications offered under most programs are selected according to a state-specific ranking and selection process. Ask your local USDA representative for a list of the criteria that will help your application rank high in your area.

If I enroll my land in a conservation program, do I maintain ownership? Am I required to allow public access to my land?

If you enroll land under an easement or rental agreement, you retain ownership of the land. Although your participation in the program will limit certain economic uses of the land during the term of the agreement, you maintain control of public access. You also maintain the right to lease the land for hunting or other recreational purposes.

Will I be responsible for maintaining practices I install under a conservation program?

Most programs require you to maintain the practices. There are some differences in programs - check with your local USDA office.

What types of wildlife will I attract if I enroll in conservation programs?

This type of wildlife attracted to your land depends greatly on the practices you install and the plans that are established. Practices can be designated and managed to attract particular declining species, such as quail, and other species.

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY/S.C. CHAPTER NEWS

Bill Wilkes, Area III Chairman and Associate Commissioner, Charleston District reports that thirty-one members and guests enjoyed a tour of historic Medway Plantation in Berkeley County on November 9. Covering 6,600 acres of prime forestland on the banks of the Back River, Medway was established in 1685 by Thomas Smith who purchased the property from the Lords Proprietors for twenty pounds Sterling. By 1701 the Plantation had grown to 2,220 acres. Despite the fact that he was a prominent Dissenter, he was appointed Governor of Southern Carolina in 1683, serving with distinction until his untimely death in 1684. Ownership of the Plantation was passed down through numerous families and increased in area until its present day size.

The tour group observed several NRCS conservation practice including controlled burning, fire break construction and maintenance, upland wildlife habitat management and shallow water impoundment for waterfowl.

After a tour the group was treated to a luncheon of Beaufort stew prepared by Dwayne Mangum and Steve Edwards. Also assisting the success of the tour were Debbie Eckard and Margaret and Bill Wilkes.



Present but not shown:

*Dwayne Mangum, Steve Edwards,
Margaret Wilkes, Bill Wilkes,
Debbie Eckard, Bobby McGee and
Bob Hortman*



Emergency Watershed Projects Busy in 2005



Two EWP projects totaling over \$333,000 were completed during the year...one in Mt. Pleasant and one on Sullivans Island. The Sullivans Island contract restored portions of the town's drainage system damaged by summer storms and consisted of repairs in drainage pipes; repairs and cleaning ditches and roadside channels and vacuuming silt and sand from the system. Over four miles of the system were restored to their original design.

The Mt. Pleasant project was required due to damage caused by Tropical Storm Gaston on August 29, 2004. Work primarily involved removing storm sediment and debris from drain inlets and pipes; regrading ditch banks and installing erosion control fabric and rip-rap.

These were the most extensive EWP projects since the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and were the result of teamwork between the District, NRCS Charleston office, Charleston county Public Works Department and the Towns of Sullivans Island and Mt. Pleasant.

THE YEAR



2005 Conservationist of the Year Award

L-R: Ann Bentley, NRCS, Jake Bishop, "Conservationist of the Year", and William S. Simpson, Chairman of the SWCD.



Sullivan's Island EWP Project



2005 Coastal Carolina Fair



*2005 "Outstanding School Participation Award"
Presented to Terry Hartnett and Carole Anne O'Neal of Montessori
Community School.*



*2005 District Christmas Social
L-R Raymond Tumbleston and William Geraty*



*2005 SWCS Medway Tour
Charleston District represented very well!*

IN PICTURES



2005 Southeastern Wildlife Expo



*2005 "Outstanding Environmental Education Award"
L-R Debbie Eckard, Education Coordinator, Twila Shaw of James
Island Christian School, William Simpson, III -Chairman*



Pasture Establishment



Prescribed burning



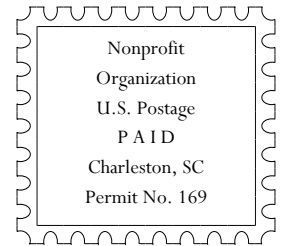
*2005 District Conservation "Teacher of the Year Award"
L-R Debbie Eckard, Susuan Rodewoldt of Ashley Hall School,
William S. Simpson, III. Chairman*



*"Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Management"
by fall rotational disking.*

CHARLESTON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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THANK YOU 2005 AFFILIATE MEMBERS !!

SUSTAINING

The Agricultural Society of SC

First Federal of Charleston
JAC, Inc. - Bill Cox
Limehouse Produce Co., Inc.
The City Marina Co.
Magnolia Plantation
Coburg Dairy, LLC
Dawhoo Farm
Santee Cooper
Frank S. Hancel, Jr.
SCANA
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LanXess Corporation
Banks Construction Co.
Bennett Hofford Co.

Sanders Brothers Construction Co.

Sunnyside Farms - Gene Walpole
William C. Kennerty
Davis & Floyd, Inc. - Tom LaRoche
F. Mitchell Johnson
Sonitrol
C.P. Darby, Jr. M.D.
Lowcountry Produce of Chas, LLC
General Engineering & Environmental
Ravenswood Plantation, Inc.
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Town of Sullivans Island
W. McLeod Rhodes Co., Inc.
Arthur M. Swanson
Arthur J. Jenkins

Palmetto Gunit Construction Co.

Celek & Celek Construction
Atlantic Coast Life Insurance
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City of Isle of Palms
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J. L. Garvin, DMD
Hewitt & Hewitt
William S. Simpson, III
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Frank M. Brumley
Van-Smith Concrete Co.
The Garden Club of Charleston

Bolded Blue names indicate Advertising Members

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